

FORUM

The Progress of Man

It would seem that someone who uses many words as F. Evans is bound to say something in the end; yet one felt that, at the conclusion of his FORUM contribution, words had literally failed him. No doubt Evans has ideas, but he is so excited, so stimulated by them that he cannot find appropriate language to express them adequately. This leads him to permute his propositions in as many different ways as possible in the hope of getting a winning line, *i.e.*, getting a combination of words that will concretely formulate what he is trying to put across.

Because direct speech cannot support the strain and stress of his mental processes he falls back on the artifices of metaphor and simile, analogies and comparisons which spark and sputter over the pages until one wonders whether they are intended to clarify his meaning or are part of the meaning itself. Evans' method of assault on the "citadel" is not to impinge on it sentence by sentence but to fuse whole groups of sentences into verbal block-busters in an attempt to blast us out of our fifty years' "prepared position."

It is not easy, therefore, to find the nub of Evans's criticism of the Party. At times he appears to say more than he actually

means, on other occasions he seems to mean more than he actually says. Short of setting it to music, one can only try to unravel the tangle of his sentences in order to find what precisely is his criticism, what he means by historical materialism and his conception of the nature of social development.

A major difficulty is that Evans has given no systematic exposition of his viewpoints; another that he seems to hold a number of confused and contradictory notions on the same subject. But, whatever one can finally boil down the bones of his contentions to, they do not in my opinion represent the standpoint of Marxists. Undoubtedly Evans has tickled the ears of a few Party groundlings, who feel that he has contributed in some significant way to the understanding of the problems of our times, though in just what way they aren't quite sure. If for that reason alone, an examination of his contribution is necessary for purposes of theoretical clarity.

As I read Evans, it seems that he views society primarily as an organism rather than a social organization working towards given ends. In fact, his article in the February, 1953 FORUM suggests that man is not man by virtue of his being a member of human society, but because he possesses more highly-developed social instincts than the rest of the animal world. Social organization, on this view, is the product of biological, qualitative change. Such views are not an advance on Marxism but a retreat. They represent the materialistic philosophy of more than a century ago: viewpoints which, if Evans cares to read Marx on Feuerbach, Hess and Strauss were emphatically repudiated by him. They were the views of Kautsky when he abandoned Marxism for "social Darwinism" in his *Materialist Conception of History*, in his attempt to formulate what he called "a more comprehensive basis for Marx's views." Some of Kautsky's errors can be discovered incipient in the chapter "Darwinism" in his *Ethics and the Materialist Conception of History*.

Evans's idea of the ineluctable process of social development, with its heavy

overtones of religious certainty, seeks, alas, to find comfort and security in the belief that social co-operation, altruism and morality are part of man's biological endowment. However, many "social Darwinists" who accept those assumptions would be quick to retort that the endowment also includes aggressiveness, cruelty, egotism, selfishness, etc. Thus it seems that what Evans calls "the natural ally" of the social instincts loses on the roundabouts what it gains on the swings. Marxists, of course, do not accept this metaphysical view of social anthropology. Man may be part of nature, but he cannot be equated with natural phenomena. Neither can the social behaviour of man be reduced to the behaviour observed in a colony of ants or bees. Nor can the laws of social development be discovered in the gregarious organisation of other animals. In fact, man cannot be compared with any other aspect of nature because he is unique.

Evans's view of the nature of man in his article *Homo Sapiens* reeks of the biology lesson and the university extension course. The special genius of man, says Evans, in his best lecturing style, is his infinite capacity for making tools. The rest of the article goes on to tell us that all the productive social changes can be located—presumably—in the rich genetic endowment of *homo sapiens*. The history of man, it seems, is the history of his biology. As I read Evans, he is simply asserting that there is something essentially man; man with his environment apparently wrapped round him like shawls, layer on layer, to protect him from the cold. If we could divest him of those layers one by one, we should ultimately discover a shivering, naked, palpitating entity—the human essence. Thus our philosopher of evolution seems to have evolved no farther than Feuerbach's theory of sensuous materialism, which also saw man as an essence.

Evans talks of sociology searching for some brilliant integrative principle, but fails to understand that Marxism provides one, *i.e.*, the integration of man and nature: the fact that man is both product and begetter of his social environment.

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Man is not merely born into society, but in truth society is born in him. Strip a man of his social dependencies and you have nothing recognizably left. Marxists, unlike Evans, do not set up a false antithesis between a biological entity on one hand and nature on the other.

For Marx, human society consists of the indissoluble unity of an environmentally-made man and a man-made environment. This he made the starting-point for the investigation of human beings. Not human beings considered in unreal abstraction, but concretely observed in the active, practical process of their socially-organized efforts. The interaction of men with nature constitutes their history. History for Marxists is not the outcome of ghostly mental categories, nor of some omnipotent self-developing matter. It is the story of socially-organised individuals in the material conditions in which they find themselves. It is these changes which constitute the dynamic of human development.

Marx's great insight was to see human nature, not as an essence, not something unalterably given, not as a sum of fixed impulses and instincts which in some mysterious way are socially projected, but as a historic variable, modified by men's social activity. To talk of any original human nature or some eternal essence of man is to utter the barest of propositions which can never be tested in practice and to which there is no referential point.

If we ask, then, what is the purpose of social organization, the answer is clearly men's needs. But those needs are not animal needs: not a biological adaptation of production and reproduction, but social needs which can only be satisfied in a social manner. Men do not confront nature as biological entities but as a social force. The fact that they have been able to change quantitatively and qualitatively their material continuum is due, not to their big brains and opposite thumbs as such, but to social co-operative labour. Man's tool-making propensities are not the outcome of his biological gifts, as Kautsky came to believe and Evans appears to follow, but the products of social organization. It is not then men's biological functions which bring into being the social division of labour, but the division of labour which gives direction and scope for their aptitudes.

While brain activity is involved in social organization, social organization cannot be reduced to brain activity. Neither can ideas. Even the ideas of a Newton, a Marx or an Einstein are as much the product of social forces as the ideas of Smith, Jones and Robinson. All are the outcome of historical development.

Nor can we say that thought can be reduced to brain activity, i.e., that the brain produces thought as the liver produces bile. The fact is that thought cannot be equated with the convolutions inside the skull, even such a highly-gifted skull as that of *homo sapiens*. Language,

ideas, ethics, philosophy, do not exist outside human society, and therefore are not to be located in the biological structure of man.

In short, society cannot be explained from an abstractly constructed matter or a fantastically conceived mind, but from the fact that community life alone makes all things possible, including self-consciousness.

When Evans says—as he did in FORUM last December—that social co-operative labour is the biological mode of human existence, one wonders just what misapprehension and confusion of Marxism lies behind the statement. To emphasize again, men have not a biological mode of existence but a social one. It is true that men are so biologically constituted, living in and through a physical environment, as to be need-seeking creatures. But the needs of men are of a specific and qualitative character which can only be derived from and fulfilled through their social organization. Men's needs are therefore never a biological mode of existence and can never be equated to animal production and reproduction, for these needs have mental and spiritual elements—in short they include the whole of his culture. If Evans does not mean what I think he means, I cannot for the life of me understand what he is trying to say.

Marx never dealt with men's needs in any abstract or idealistic fashion *a la* Feuerbach, the need for men to realize the essence of their humanity or achieve the perfectibility of their species. For him, men's needs and the means of satisfying them rose out of the concrete demands of practical life and were related to a definite stage of historical production. That is why Marx began with the primary needs of men, *viz.*, for food, clothing, shelter, means of transit and communication. These needs, however, are not a simple repetitive process but are continually changing. Thus new needs arise which, either in whole or in part, replace old needs and are replaced in turn. This then provides the clue, not only to changes in human development but to changes in human beings. The changing character of human needs is itself related to changes in productive methods, which include tools and techniques and which correspond to and are dependent upon the prevailing social division of labour. Changes in the character of human needs are in part then the result of changes in productive methods, just as changes in productive methods are in part the outcome of changing needs.

The productive activity of man is not a bare, undifferentiated process, but an activity of increasing scope and complexity. It is the activity above all other activities that brings into play the aptitudes and capacities of individuals and provides the impetus for art, science, aesthetics, etc. Even ethics, religion and philosophy can

be shown to be connected in some way or other with the productive activities of man, because it can be shown that they serve to regularize and formalize a given way of life. Even the towering edifice of abstract speculation has its roots in practical life. No matter how remote a philosophical doctrine seems to be, analysis shows that to a considerable extent it is a rationalization of a certain set of historical conditions, and this serves the social need of explaining and justifying a given form of class relationships. If this is what Evans means when he talks about institutions, ideologies, etc., being aspects or facets of social labour, he has certainly gone to involved and tortuous lengths to express it. Although why Evans should go to such lengths to achieve so artificial and laboured a monism is hard to explain.

Nevertheless, I feel that in Evans's theories there are ambiguous and self-contradictory elements. In the first place, it does seem to me that he regards society as analogous to a biological organism, and he appears to argue that there is a natural growth of society as there is a natural growth of plant and animal life. Or, just as we proceed from infancy to maturity as the result of inherent laws of development, so does society develop from the simple to the complex *via* its own internal compulsions without regard to human volition. It is true Evans makes some concessions to human activity, but it is an activity after the event—not before. All we can achieve, it seems, is a self-consciousness of what is happening; our activity can never be re-directive and so change the course of events themselves. As I understand him, Evans regards the course of social development as determined in such a way that the end is as much involved in the beginning as the beginning in the end. To me, this is not historic necessity but a piece of fatalism—a variation on the theme that the stars in courses work for the coming of Socialism.

"History is a sum which moves only one way," says Evans in one of his many apocalyptic statements. There are many other statements of his that seem to allege that the laws of human development have the same objective character as the movement of the solar system. While we can account for the movement of the heavenly bodies, we cannot deflect them from their courses. In much the same way, it appears from the statements of Evans, must we regard the movement of history. The stream of events flows on to its appointed end or ends. "There is an historic destiny which shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we may." Evans's criticism of the Party—if such it can be called—is that we are vainly struggling against the stream with an inflated set of principles acting as water-wings to keep us just afloat. His advice is that we should just flow, or perhaps drift, with the tide, and have a much more comfortable journey; but whatever we do will make no difference,

for the course of social evolution is given. The Mills of Evolution grind slowly, but every day, every hour, they grind out the new social order. The political revolution, says Evans with a contemptuous dismissal of the assumptions of our fifty years' existence, will be but the rubber stamp signifying an accomplished fact. Socialism will come, apparently, not because it is a social good but because Evans can prove scientifically that it is the inevitable outcome of the laws of social progress working out with iron necessity. There is no escape.

For that reason, I find Evans's concept of progress somewhat forbidding, even sinister. It does so much in the social process and leaves so little for us that one could only feel—if one believed it—the depressing fact of being a supernumerary to the whole business. For years we have held the illusion, it seems, that only by attempting to change the world do we change ourselves and other people. Yet the only effect of all this, *vide* Evans, is to get in the way of progress and be knocked down for our pains. For years we have believed that poverty, exploitation, war, etc., were real social categories. Now, according to Evans, they are the mere appearance of things—in substance they are aspects of progress. For Evans the S.P.G.B. version of capitalism is "a tale

told by idiots, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

Again, socialists—and even non-socialists—may consider war a bad thing. Evans can rise above such pettifogging notions. Where ordinary people see technical development as something incidental to war, Evans regards war and preparation for war as prime movers in social development. In an earlier article, I gave reasons to show that this could not be substantiated in actual fact. The trouble with universal progress *a la* Evans is that everything has to serve its ends and imaginary attributes have to be given to different aspects of social life in order to let the theory be consistent with itself. This is, of course, a naive teleology. If Evans had set out to show what, in his opinion, were progressive elements in present-day society, he would have contented himself with factual and empirical analysis instead of world-shattering generalizations. He would have had to show tendencies against as well as for, and after cancellation his net results would not have added up to his extravagant claims. In that case he would have presented his case with the greatest economy, and not wrapped it up in words as if he were hiding a guilty secret.

If it is said that I have over-stated Evans's views, I would remind anybody:

Has not Evans invented a device which he calls the economic process to show how Evolution, Destiny, Social Progress (or whatever term is used) achieves its inscrutable ends? Were we not told that the mechanism of relative surplus value, without regard to men's wishes, irrespective of employers or wage-earners, irons out silently and remorselessly all differences of class and privilege? And so the path to the promised land is no hard and stony one, but a well-upholstered Pullman ride. A sort of Fabianism *de-luxe*.

This article is necessarily in the nature of a preliminary in order to show that, in my view, Evans's viewpoints are not Marxist ones but are akin to the views of Comte and Spencer and the doctrines of Bentham—"the greatest happiness of the greatest number." Into all this he has spatchcocked Hegelian categories by a left-handed dialectical twist. Thus his views are a mixture of the abstract evolutionism of Spencer and the social teleology of Hegel. In my next article I propose to contrast Evans's views of social development with those of Marx, to scrutinize his statement that social systems are arbitrary abstractions—and to try and show that social algebra is capable of being factorized.

E.W.

Correspondence

THE COLOUR QUESTION

COMRADES,

May I make one or two comments on the article of the above name?

First, we are *not* "working for a society which, as yet, exists only in the minds of a little ever a thousand people." If F. Dunne had not written another word, this alone would convey his inability to grasp the essentials of the socialist approach to history. This reproach that Socialism is only an idea that exists in the minds of a few half-wits and cranks is one which is peculiarly symptomatic of the opponents of Socialism, and if our comrade is at all experienced in combating that sort of attitude he'll not fail to appreciate this point. If his statement were true, of course, I should have packed up being a socialist a long time ago and devoted myself exclusively to bee-keeping or some other practical pastime. As a matter of fact, the only reason we can tell people that socialist society "will be based on common ownership" is that it is the only historically possible society to emanate from the present conditions. Since "brevity is the soul of wit," let this suffice for the moment

as far as that point is concerned.

Second, is it possible to "agree with a lot of socialist ideas" any yet display anti-negro prejudice? I think not. Are socialist ideas just a lot of baggage from which one dips casually for a few frayed garments? Again, I think not. No one, I think, may be called a socialist who whilst utilizing a few half-digested formulae has not yet grasped the essential comprehensive approach of the socialist viewpoint. True, the comprehensiveness may grow and enrich itself from small beginnings, but even at the outset it must cover a certain area of understanding which would certainly include the disabusing of the mind of anti-negroism.

Third—"that there will be harmful conflicts due to colour and cultural prejudice is hardly to be doubted." The only thing here to be doubted is Dunne's grasp of the materialist conception of history. That he imagines this to be an explanation "on strictly economic lines" merely emphasizes his present inadequate understanding of our approach to human behaviour. The conflicts which arise on

the colour question arise (we argue) because of particular or general capitalist interests, and the general social and psychological climate that such interests tend to foster—*e.g.*, South Africa. Where the ruling interests tend no longer to find the colour-bar useful, the drift goes the other way—*e.g.*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruling ending segregation in education. Where, as in Socialism, ruling interests exist not at all, there will not be any "serious disruption of social harmony." (Judging from the Benin contribution to the plastic arts, the negro has yet to make his great contribution to the life of man, and the so-called white people in socialist society will welcome it with open arms).

Last, should it be necessary to remind a fellow socialist that Socialism means the establishment of *social* equality and not the sterile conception of economic equality (to which piece-work is more akin than Socialism) and that it is this equality and the liberation of man from fear, oppression and anxiety that tears at the roots of colour prejudice?

M. JUDD.

HINTS ON PUBLIC SPEAKING: 2

The would-be speaker is strongly advised to read or re-read the previous article from now on it is assumed he understands the fundamentals dealt with in the July FORUM.

There are three parts to oral self-expression, as follows: First, DISCOVERY (a) of ideas (b) of words; second, ARRANGEMENT (a) of ideas (b) of words; third, DELIVERY (a) of ideas (b) of words.

The discovery of ideas and words will be dealt with later, and the arrangement of ideas treated when we come to the method of note-preparation. The delivery or communication of ideas is fundamental to all forms of verbal self-expression, and therefore there is hardly a line in these notes which does not have some bearing on it. The arrangement of words in sentences is a matter of syntax, and is outside the scope of these notes.

Similarly, consideration of the delivery of words leads into the realms of elocution. No attempt will be made in these notes to teach elocution, but it will be touched on later.

The Progressive Plan.

Where many would-be speakers fail is in attempting too much at the outset. They do not realize that, in seeking to acquire skill, it is a matter of beginning at the beginning with the simplest exercises. Patience and common sense are called for: the rest will come with practice.

The following may be taken as the various steps in the oral communication of ideas. (1) The written and read speech; (2) the written, memorized and recited speech; (3) the prepared speech delivered from notes; (4) the prepared speech delivered without notes; (5) the extempore speech.

These five stages are truly progressive, for to write out and read an address is the lowest form of speech-making (in fact, it is not making a speech at all), while extempore speaking is the highest form. Ruling out the first and second stages, we shall adopt the prepared speech with notes, the prepared speech without notes and the extempore speech as our three stages.

Avoid from the outset the practice of reading a prepared speech. It is a blind alley from which one can only retreat by a right-about turn. Exactly the same is true of the speech which is learned and recited. The secret of forceful public speaking is adaptability to the occasion and audience.

The "speaker" who has carefully memorised his speech often finds that his audience for some reason is not receptive to it. The speech is wasted, because he has not been prepared to adapt it to a changed situation: he delivers it, conscious of its shortcomings.

application of the "progressive" principle suggests beginning with a few notes, even a single note, and working up to a twenty or thirty-point speech lasting an hour.

Imagine your audience.

Practise in private, always to an imaginary audience. One may be suspected of "having a screw loose" if one is surprised haranguing a non-existent audience (though to have one's finer susceptibilities dulled a little by ridicule is in itself a useful experience for a would-be speaker). In any case, the time may come when one's sanity will be openly questioned by an opponent!

Take your subject and make, say, half a dozen three- or four-word notes on various aspects of it. Take simple, straight-forward points, self-contained as far as possible. Drop these notes, which should be written on separate pieces of paper, into a box. Then put the box on a table and take your stand behind it, facing your imaginary audience. Take out a note and deal with it in a sentence, or at most in two or three sentences; guard above everything against wandering from the point, or talking round the point instead of straight to it. Continue the process until all the notes in the box have been dealt with. It should be noticed that no attempt is being made at this stage to combine the notes or deal with them in any sort of logical order. The aim of the exercise is to secure facility in producing coherent sentences—speeches in miniature.

The Question and Answer Exercise.

A variation is to imagine that one has delivered an address and a number of questions have been asked. Write down these questions, put them in the box, and deal with them in the manner described.

The next stage is reached (and it should not be reached until you are able to deal with isolated points with fluency and precision) when you can take, say, ten points which have some common relationship within the subject and place them in logical order. These points should then be dealt with in strict order; no longer as isolated but as related points. In other words, an attempt should be made to deliver a coherent speech, making forward or backward reference to the other points as necessary to clearness and conciseness of expression. Gradually increase the number of points, until you are dealing with thirty or forty in a single speech..

At this stage one should deliberately



"Please will you write
some notes on how to
restrain a ready wit?"

The First Stage.

The first true stage in public speaking is the prepared speech delivered from notes. It must be made clear, by the way, that "prepared speech" does not mean one written out at length. The preparation consists of the discovery and arrangement of ideas, the inspiration of the moment being largely relied upon to clothe those ideas in words.

Let us assume that your efforts to speak in public have been confined to asking questions. Clearly, it is logical for you to learn to speak from notes. Trying to speak extemporaneously from the start is unwise: one's abilities are not equal to it. Furthermore, in speaking from notes the

begin to practice clearness of delivery, articulating each word clearly and distinctly. This matter of delivery is mentioned here only in order that it may be remarked that to gabble your speech is a grave fault—even to an imaginary audience. The bad habit of gabbling and mumbling does not need to be cured if never acquired. Talk to your imaginary audience as you would to a real one.

Speaking without Notes.

Let us assume now that we have reached the stage of being able to deliver in private a speech of twenty or thirty minutes' duration from carefully prepared and very full notes. We now begin a new stage in our practice, the object of which is to enable us to dispense with notes as far as possible.

Again beginning at the beginning, we write down on slips of paper *the titles only* of half a dozen ten-minute speeches. Prepare notes in the ordinary way for each of them, in order to have the ideas ready and mentally arranged. But the notes are put aside and not spoken from.

The day following the preparation of the notes, the title-slips should be placed in the box. Take one out, glance at it, and *at once try to visualise your notes*. If you have reached this stage by adequate practice, you should be able now to concentrate on what you are going to say instead of how you are going to say it. In other words your thoughts should be concentrated on the ideas, not on the words with which to clothe them. Though you have no notes to guide you, if you have prepared your speech beforehand properly—that is, discovered and arranged your ideas—you should have no difficulty in keeping to your point and saying all you want to say in the time at your disposal.

Developing Conciseness.

This reference to time suggests another very useful exercise. Time yourself with a long speech from notes. Repeat it on subsequent days, until you can deliver it in about two-thirds of the time it originally took. The object of this exercise is not to increase your speed of delivery, but to develop conciseness of expression and eliminate the relatively unimportant and the irrelevant.

You should now have arrived at the stage when you can deliver a prepared speech—if only a short one—without notes. Try to visualise your notes and deliver your lecture not as remembered but as visualised, so that you can adapt the lecture as circumstances demand.

Easy-to-Follow Notes.

When beginning to lecture it is a good plan to use full notes. I am going to digress to suggest the following plan because I believe it to be useful. Write your notes on large quarto sheets, dividing each sheet into two with a pencil line from top to bottom. On the left, write the really important points (compressed into a few "key" words). Below and on the right,

write the subsidiary points. Thus, if the left of the line is filled the right is left blank, and vice-versa. When complete, the notes should look like a number of steps—left, right, left, right—down the page. It is almost impossible to lose your place in such notes. Any imperative points can be underlined with red ink. This method of note preparation is very useful to those who are prone to nervousness.

Extempore Speaking.

We come now to the highest form of oral expression—extempore speaking. The difference between speaking without notes and extempore is this: in the former, we knew beforehand that we had to speak and were able to marshal our ideas, arrange them and maybe impress them on our memory by writing them down—in the latter, our being called upon to speak is unexpected, and we get on our feet to collect our ideas, arrange them and deliver them practically simultaneously. For example, I may attend a Party meeting on a subject about which it is known I have some expert knowledge. The chairman invites me to reply to certain criticisms: if I accept, I must give an extempore speech, for I came to listen only.

The difference between prepared and extempore self-expression is that in the former we have some tangible evidence of our idea-arrangement to guide us, but in the latter we have not. As has already been said, in extempore speaking the sorting, sifting and arrangement of our ideas is a mental process occurring in the main simultaneously with physical expression. A practised extempore speaker is always thinking a little ahead of what he is saying.

The ideas are present in the minds of the prepared and the extempore speaker, but the former does not trust his ability to call to mind all the points he desires to deal with, or deal with them in their right order, so he speaks from notes. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that the extempore speaker gets to his feet with an empty brain and then gives expression to ideas which float from nowhere into his consciousness. Like the prepared speaker, he must have taken in a load of ideas before they can give out!

Mere glibness can never be a substitute for knowledge of one's subject. The man who tries to speak extempore on a subject he knows next to nothing about will either talk irrelevancies or find himself in deep and dangerous waters.

Freshness and Spontaneity.

It should be the aim of all would-be speakers to speak extemporaneously. All outdoor work demands this ability in a highly-developed form, and there are occasions when it is required at an indoor meeting. It is considered by many that the extempore speaker is always more interesting to listen to than one who has made elaborate preparation; certainly it is true that there is far more spontaneity

in the remarks of the extempore speaker, who seems far more sensitive and responsive to his audience.

A Party speaker must aim both at speaking extempore and at lecturing from notes in the best possible way.

Exercise in Extempore Speaking.

The best practice in extempore speaking is obtained by speaking, not on a subject one has made peculiarly one's own, but on subjects of general interest. A few suggested topics for practice:

Is the payment of fines in Trade Unions a good practice?

Is Superstition dead?

How can the roads be made safer?

Is religion still "the opium of the people"?

Are the wireless programmes too high-brow?

The question form of topic makes it possible to take up a "Yes" or "No" attitude according to one's views on the matter.

If the subjects are chosen immediately before the exercise, one cannot "cheat" by mentally preparing beforehand. When practising extempore speaking, you must always endeavour to think ahead. Adopt a rather slower and more deliberate delivery than usual, so as to give yourself time to sort and sift your ideas as you go along. *Think quickly and talk slowly*—that might be adopted as the golden rule of extempore speaking.

Enter the Audience!

So far, all the attempts at public speaking have been made before that well-behaved audience, the imaginary one. Now, however, we must get ready to do our public speaking publicly.

The first thing is to get used to the sound of one's voice in public: not as simple as it may sound. However, the same progressive plan can and should be followed. It is best to begin not in the role of speaker but as a chairman, though it is assumed you have sufficient knowledge to pass the Party Speaker's Test. As chairman at an indoor meeting you will get used to facing an audience: you will be expected to introduce the speaker and subject, and this will give you the opportunity of speaking extemporaneously, or with notes, for five or ten minutes. Next, take every opportunity of being chairman at outdoor meetings: this usually means that you are in fact the first speaker. Part of your job is to attract an audience; this in itself is good training and will give ample opportunity for extempore speaking. When you have got used to the sound of your own voice and feel the urge to progress farther, a good idea is to offer your services to the propaganda committee to speak at outdoor meetings in company with experienced speakers.

Remember: as a Party speaker you will need tact, patience, humour and the ability to handle an audience, and you will have to accustom yourself to disappointment as well as the occasional

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EDITORIAL

First, our apologies to everyone for the gap in the appearance of FORUM. When certain difficulties first appeared, the intention was to bridge them by publishing an August-September issue; later, it was decided simply to omit issues for those two months and start from October with a clean sheet. From November, the regular issue will be resumed at approximately the middle of each month, with no more gaps.

To our regret, too, the price of FORUM has had to be raised. The circulation has increased a little, but not by anything like the figure which would have knocked down our deficit. Ninepence was the only answer. Perhaps it will not sound too pious to point out that the price can be reduced at any time in the future when the circulation justifies it.

Because of the delay which made the subject rather stale, the review of the Maxton biography has not been published. We are resuming the publication of a monthly drawing in this issue, and a regular column about books is to appear shortly. Meanwhile, we are looking for fresh contributions—particularly as our serials obviously won't go on for ever! Few people seem to want to argue with the contentions of present contributors, though they offer plenty of scope for controversy: FORUM has not ceased to function as a medium for argument.

Finally, about bound volumes. It escaped our notice that the changed layout of FORUM from May onwards had involved also a slightly different size and width of margin. This meant that the four issues from January to April this year, excluded from last year's collection, could not conveniently have been bound with this year's. It was therefore decided to include those four issues with the 1954 volume, and the alterations to the index have caused the delay in the appearance of the volume.

Contributions to "Forum" should be addressed to the Internal Party Journal Committee, at Head Office. If they cannot be typed, articles should be written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors are asked to give their addresses and the names of their Branches. Contributors intending series of articles should give an indication of the scope of their series, not send merely a first article.

CUTTINGS

From the "Financial Times" Review of British Industry, 1955

Manufacturing output in total is now 50 per cent. greater than in 1937. But because of the need to devote more resources to exports, to defence and to reconstituting our capital the increase of consumption has been much less than proportionate to the increase of gross domestic product. The latter, in real terms, is probably between 25 and 30 per cent. greater than in 1938. But of this, only about 64 per cent., as against about 71 per cent. in 1938, now goes to consumption; about 20 per cent., as against 15 per cent. in 1938, goes to current Government expenditure on goods and services; about 16 per cent., as against 14 per cent. in 1938, goes to gross capital formation. Because of the reduced share to consumption, we enjoy in aggregate only about 14 per cent. greater real consumption than before the war. But since population has risen by 7 per cent., real consumption per head is only about 7 per cent. higher than in 1938. It is only in the last two years, and briefly in 1950 before rearmament, that it has been at all appreciably above the 1938 level.

(Arthur Robinson: *The Changes in Our Economic Circumstances*).

* * *

Man-made fibres offer an easy object of romantic speculation, and it is not surprising that modern means of communication and propaganda have occasionally exaggerated, inevitably if quite unintentionally, the volume, scope and likely future of production. The true synthetic fibres have suffered an overdose of publicity, notably in the United States, but also in this country.

Textile technologists have long known, and by now ordinary people have realised, that the sheep farmer, the cotton grower, and even the silk farmer, have ahead of them a reasonable life's work.

(Daniel Duxbury: *Rising Output of Man-Made Fibres*).

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There is another important aspect to the advent of commercial programmes. It will bring to the fore and develop a replacement demand for TV which has already started to make itself felt. Sets made prior to 1950, with their smaller screens and lacking the refinements in circuit design since developed, are approaching the end of their useful life. The durability of these sets has surprised many people, as five years was generally reckoned as the serviceable life of the early receivers.

(John Hay: *The Prospect for Radio and Television Set Makers*).

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While very little can be said about the results of future pure research, we can be fairly sure that they will not be responsible for large-scale technological effects in the next 20 years. It is true that

the gap between scientific advance and technological utilization is growing shorter every day, but large-scale industrial developments need very big capital investments which tend to introduce a buffer time of a decade or two.

(Sir Francis Simon: *The Next Twenty Years*).

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Experience, both in Britain and America, has shown that the introduction of an incentive payment scheme is not the only or even the main purpose of Work Study. As a by-product, such a scheme may have valuable results in raising the standard of work, particularly where through bad habits it has fallen to low levels, but it is generally found that the scientific study of the methods employed, not only in the manual operation involved but in the process as a whole, yields results which are more valuable and more permanently fruitful of further progress than those resulting from the monetary incentives which may be given as a result of appending an incentive scheme to the achievements of the Work Study itself.

(*Monetary Incentives for Workers as an Aid to Higher Output*).

* * *

Within the next ten years there will be a new generation of better educated young mothers—and if the annual school leaving rate of girls is an accurate guide about 2½ million more. The education of girls has been streamlined; they are now instructed in the use of electric power in the home and they are able to see, inspect, and adapt themselves to the use of up-to-date equipment in laundry, cooking and housewifery classes . . . in some localities housecraft centres provide for instruction in electric cooking, laundering and household maintenance. When it is realised that in the centres of one locality alone some 9,000 students receive instruction for two-and-a-half hours a week at two to four-year courses, a better impression of the future demand for efficient electrical equipment can be gained.

(Ivor Williams: *Domestic Efficiency*).

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It is already found in America that workers tend to choose the better buildings when seeking employment. It gives a man additional self-respect when he can point to the factory he works in with pride, and a cleanly designed and colourful interior inspires a higher morale and therefore better standards of workmanship. Already a number of manufacturers, aware of these facts, are enlisting the advice of consultants to advise them on interior treatment. The interiors of the factories of tomorrow will be far more attractive and colourful than those of today.

(Ralph Tubbs: *The Architecture of Tomorrow*).

MARXISM and LITERATURE: 4

" What did a young man care about the approval of respectability, or honourable guild privileges handed down for generations, when the wealth of India beckoned to him, the gold and silver mines of Mexico and Potosis? "

(Engels: *The Origin of the Family*).
" Let not our babbling dreams affright our souls; Conscience is but a word that cowards use, Devis'd at first to keep the strong in awe: Our strong arms be our conscience, swords our law."

(Shakespeare: *Richard the Third*).

There is the outlook of the sixteenth century gentry, as they coalesced with the trading class and became, in Marx's words, " children of their age to whom money was the power of all powers." The Elizabethan era was not a " happy interlude between two worlds " (Tawney's phrase); far from such a sort of historical half-time (which is impossible anyway), it was capitalism's age of primary accumulation, when agriculture and industry were transformed and a new phase in class struggles began.

Popular historians love the Elizabethan era. Its profusion of personalities, the opportunities—and the penalties—for ambition, that independent private production made; the conspicuous consumption, in splendiferous dress and lavish patronage; the severance from mediæval tradition, and the enthusiasm for new ideals . . . these were the romantic externals, rataplan and oompa for rent-rolls and profits. That is not to say capitalism had extinguished feudalism. In the north and west countries landlords still held undisputed sway, and in the towns, new industries struggled against the guild system. But, as Tawney says in *Social History and Literature*: " The bourgeois elements in society, which formed the majority—peasants with enough land to produce a small surplus for the market; the more prosperous yeoman, small masters and tradesmen; the gentry who farmed their own lands or leased them to farmers; the business classes generally—had the wind behind them."

The diversity of interests and motives in this society produced a many-sided literature. And here something important has to be said. To relate literature (or anything else) to economic and social life is not to say that men are puppets in the hands of " economic conditions. " Historical materialism is a determinism, certainly, but one in which man's reaction upon his environment is itself a determining factor.

Thus, Marx: " Man makes his own history, but he does not make it out of the whole cloth, he does not make it out of conditions chosen by himself, but out of conditions such as he finds close at hand " (*The Eighteenth Brumaire*). And again: " Labour is, in the first place, a process in which both man and nature participate, and which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material reactions between himself and nature. He opposes himself to nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to appropriate nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants. By thus acting on the external and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature " (*Capital*, Volume I).

In the upheaval of those times, ideologies were plentiful. Dominant among the intellectual tendencies of Europe was the one called Humanism—drawn, in fact, from the ideas of classical antiquity. In Greece and Rome, as in sixteenth-century Europe, there had been commodity production and commerce; but, as Kautsky says, " what had been in Antiquity the zenith of social development was at the close of the Middle Ages the starting point of a new society. " The humanists held the wisely ruled nation-state as the means to their end of a human, political culture—not excluding the Catholic Church, to which most of them belonged.

Thus, Dante, Machiavelli, Boccaccio were humanists (the last guying the fat priests and slow-witted peasants who were feudal symbols). There was the fantastical Rabelais, lampooning the Church but presenting a monastic utopia where enjoyment and science ruled in place of ascetic scholasticism—new wines for the old papal bottles. There was the *Utopia* itself, vision of the humanist Thomas More. The European princes and the English Tudors took humanist scholars to help them govern; they required " not merely the material resources of the bourgeoisie, but also the services of its ideologists " (Kautsky). So, though the Reformation turned Catholic Humanism into Jesuitism, the humanist outlook went on to find its best expression in Shakespeare.

Individualism—man a free agent, subject only to conscience and patriotism; causation—man rejecting the metaphysical, seeking the rational; optimism—man fighting to bring his aspirations true. There you have the ideology of the revolutionary middle

" In every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch. "

MARX.

class, which Shakespeare expounded. Other writers had it too, of course, in whole or in part. The strength and ruthlessness of the growing master class were expressed magnificently by Christopher Marlowe. Tamburlaine, Faustus, the Jew of Malta—tremendous figures, standing against the world and heroic even in downfall: Shakespeare wrote nothing more gripping than the last hour of Faustus.

No writer (except Marx) has had more nonsense written about him than Shakespeare. The Elizabethan poets, of whom he was one, were not " a nest of singing birds, " a unique profusion of genius. As Catherine Ing shows in her *Elizabethan Lyrics*, they were conscious, diligent workmen, creating new forms of verse—mostly on Italian models—to break from the mediæval traditions. Shakespeare's learning was not phenomenal but was common to the merchants' sons classically educated at the newly established grammar schools; Marlowe, Nash, Webster, Jonson and the rest had it too. Not everything Shakespeare wrote is wonderful; at times he produced dull, uninspired stuff. Always, however, his drama is the drama of the world he lived in, carefully observed and scrupulously portrayed.

It is impossible here to consider Shakespeare's plays, though each has something to say about its time—even the light comedies, affirming the new humanist conceptions of personal relationships: as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where tradition gives in to love; and *Twelfth Night*, caricaturing puritanism and degenerate nobility. And *The Merchant of Venice*—not a play of racial conflict (as so many think) but a struggle between usurers' capital and merchants' capital. The chronicle plays are concerned with state power, expressing Shakespeare's—the early bourgeoisie's—ideal of a strong monarchy supported by the people. Henry the Fifth is more concept than king.

Shakespeare's greatest, most powerful plays are the ones concerned with personal conflict, however: *Hamlet* and *King Lear*, their subject-matter the moral cataclysm as one world gave place to another. Hamlet the humanist, driven by conscience as a man must be in the individualized commodity world—caught, as Smirnov says, " between the corruption of the court, the vulgarity of the growing bourgeoisie, and the masses in whom he has no belief. " *King Lear*'s theme is nothing less than the downfall of the mediæval world. Lear is the personification of feudal

kingship, beaten down by his elder daughters and Edmund, representatives of the new order with all its ruthless rapaciousness.

Before the end of Shakespeare's life the capitalist outlook was changing rapidly. The luxurious merchant-adventurer was a Renaissance figure; by 1600 he was being superseded by the money-grubber pure and simple—soon to become the Puritan, with greedy abstinence his religion. The petty-capitalist virtues were sung by Thomas Deloney, author of *Thomas of Reading*, *The Gentle Craft* and *Jack of Newberry*: chronicles of manufacturing life, pointing the rewards of honest industriousness. And, because feudalism was not yet dead, there were Beaumont and Fletcher, aiming to eulogize absolute kingship and producing effects of decadence instead—compare Fletcher's lingering fondness for incest and perversion with Shakespeare's realistic treatment of sexual love (*Venus and Adonis*, for example).

One other writer needs to be mentioned—Ben Jonson, middle-class political propagandist. Ridicule was his weapon: ridicule for superstition (*The Alchemist*), greed (*Bartholomew Fair*), depravity (*Every Man in his Humour*). In Jonson's eyes, people got the rulers they deserved; his *Sejanus* and *Catiline* are dramas of vicious tyrants begotten by corrupt society. Thus, like every great satirist, he hoped "to correct morals through ridicule." *Volpone* is tremendous stuff, portraying the avaricious low-lives and parasites Jonson knew. "Conscience?" cries Volpone—"tis the beggar's virtue!"

Why did the drama flower, as they say, in the Elizabethan era? Call it the theatre, and you are half-way to the answer. The mediæval drama was a part of community life, originating in round dances and village mumming. It was taken up by the Church, and later by the guilds, for the presentation of "mysteries" and morality plays. From church porches and market squares it went to inn-yards, which, with their surrounding balconies, set the pattern for the first playhouses. And at this point, at the close of the Middle Ages, drama became the theatre. The modern entertainment industry was born; social amusement became a profession, and Europe theatre-mad.

A writer needed a patron. Most poets were wealthy men themselves: Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Thomas Wyatt, the Earls of Oxford, Dorset, Surrey—look down the index of *The Oxford Book of Sixteenth Century Verse*. These apart, there was printing and there was a small reading public, but no-one could live by writing books. Patrons were not scarce: the upper classes, the aristocrats and the rich merchants, expected to pay musicians and poets and dramatists to provide their entertainment and help give

them an aura of culture. Having found patrons, the writers had one supreme concern—to please them. Perhaps they could please some of the patrons all the time, and possibly they could please all the patrons some of the time . . . but, without any doubt, it was a difficult business.

The rise of the theatre provided something new in patronage: the paying public. They still had to be pleased (the reason why almost every Shakespeare play has a funny man), but it was a different proposition. Every writer looked to the theatre, hoping to associate himself with an acting company. Leaving out the Lords and Sirs, there is scarcely a notable figure among the Elizabethans who was not primarily a playwright. To be a professional writer meant writing for the theatre then, just as it means writing fiction to-day.

The Puritans objected to the theatre. It kept people from work, it made them spend their money, it was bawdy and it was likely to make a hardworking man dissatisfied (for that reason, Catholic priests are forbidden to attend theatres to-day). The sentiments spread as puritanism grew, until in 1642 the theatres were suppressed—and remained so for eighteen years, until the Restoration. What happened afterwards is described by Plekhanov:

"When the restoration of the Stuarts temporarily re-established the rule of the old nobility in England, this nobility not only did not reveal the slightest aspiration to *imitate* the extreme representatives of the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie, the *Puritans*, but showed the strongest inclinations to habits and tastes which were the *direct opposite* of the Puritan rules of life. The Puritans had been very religious; Restoration society made a display of its irreligion. The Puritans had persecuted the theatre and literature; their fall was the signal for a renewed enthusiasm for both . . . Because it was a century which saw a very marked sharpening of the struggle between the nobility and the bourgeoisie—or rather, the whole "third estate."

(*Art and Social Life*).

Before reaching that point, something must be said of the religious poets and tract-writers who were the chief literary product of the half-century before 1660 (because all other art was suspect to the Puritans). The Anglican Church stood for the monarchy and nobility, Puritans for the small and Presbyterians for the large bourgeoisie. That was the nominal line-up in the seventeenth-century struggle for political power, each class aiming to impose the religious outlook which expressed its own interests. The many facets of this religious concern display themselves in poets like Herbert, Crashaw,

Traherne and Andrew Marvell, and in the prose and verse of John Milton.

Milton was puritanism's great advocate, seeing it as a revolutionary force whose victory would mean a regenerated England leading the world. And, whatever one thinks of him as a poet, it is worth remembering that in the twenty years of Puritan domination his entire output was of polemics and pamphlets. Perhaps that is why his verses have little appeal to-day compared with those of Donne, who was no puritan at all. John Donne, parson and bedfellow, trying to reconcile for himself the mediæval with the new conception of things and settling finally for a metaphysical solution—in the emotional longing, the moody sensuality, the uncertainty and questioning of everything, there is a great deal which rings bells in this age. It is hard to be out of sympathy with a writer who can go from this—

"No man is an *Iland*, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the *Continent*, a parte of the maine; if a *Clod* be washed away by the *Sea*, *Europe* is the lesse, as well as if a *Promontorie* were, as well as if a *Mannor* of thy *friends* or of *thine owne* were; any man's *death* diminishes *me*, because I am involved in *Mankinde*; and therefore never send to know for whom the *bell* tolls; it tolls for *thee*."

To—

"For Godsake hold your tongue,
and let me love."

R. COSTER.

NOTE: In preparing this section, the writer has been particularly indebted to Kautsky's *Thomas More and his Utopia*, A. A. Smirnov's *Shakespeare: A Marxist Interpretation*, and Chapter 31 of the first volume of *Capital*. He also made reference to F. A. Ridley's *The Revolutionary Tradition in England* and thought it ineffable twaddle.

HINTS ON PUBLIC SPEAKING

(Continued from page 157)

triumph. In other words, you must discipline yourself and be subordinate to Party interests—many potentially good speakers have failed because they did not see the necessity of these simple requirements. Experience and continuous practice will solve most of the problems you will meet.

Next month it is proposed to go further into the question of notes, a most important part of any speaker's equipment. And I would suggest that interested readers of those notes may find it useful to keep the issues of FORUM containing them: though published in serial form, they can usefully be read as a whole.

R. AMBRIDGE.